DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 222 976 EA 015 117

AUTHOR Kelsh, Bruce
TITLE Student Exchange Program Advances Foreign Language Study at Crow High School.
INSTITUTION Oregon School Study Council, Eugene.
PUB DATE Oct 82
NOTE 39p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications, Oregon School Study Council, College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403 ($4.00; quantity discounts).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT OSSC Bulletin; v26 n2 Oct 1982

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Foreign Countries; Foreign Students; Government School Relationship; High Schools; High School Students; *International Educational Exchange; International Programs; Latin Americans; *Second Language Instruction; Spanish; *Student Exchange Programs
IDENTIFIERS Costa Rica; *Crow Applegate Lorane School District OR; Mexico; Oregon; *Partners of the Americas

ABSTRACT

Oregon's low requirements for foreign language instruction at the secondary school level have caused Oregon students to place well below the national average in foreign language preparation, according to this report. The Oregon Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, created in 1980, recommended substantial increases in the study of foreign languages and international studies and urged wider use of student exchange programs. In addition to outlining the status of foreign language instruction in Oregon, this report discusses the growth and development of two student exchange programs, both instigated through the efforts of educators in the small Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District. The Partners of the Americas exchange program, begun in 1967, is affiliated with the Partners of the Alliance program, under which individual states are coupled with Latin American countries for cultural and economic exchange. Partners of the Americas adds educational exchange, involving both students and educators, to the agreement. Costa Rica's exchanges with Oregon in general and with the Crow district in particular are described. The second program involves group exchanges between schools in Ensenada (Mexico) and Crow High School, and is characterized as an outstanding success. An appendix lists the Oregon representatives of eight student exchange programs. (PGD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED222976

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Philip K. Piele

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Student Exchange Program Advances Foreign Language Study at Crow High School

Bruce Kelsh

EA 015 117

October 1982
Vol. 26, No. 2

OSSC BULLETIN

OSSC BULLETIN

Student Exchange Program Advances Foreign Language Study at Crow High School

Bruce Kelsh

October 1982
Vol. 26, No. 2

Individual Copy $4.00
Discount of 10% for 10 or more copies

Preface

The recently released final report of the Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies confronts Oregon educators with the unhealthy condition of foreign language preparation in the state's schools. Oregon graduating seniors fall well below national and western regional norms in foreign language study, and current standards are inadequate, the commission found.

Not content merely to diagnose the problem, the commission went on to prescribe a long-term recovery program. The commission's recommendations emphasize that foreign language learning and cultural awareness must become curriculum priorities, starting at the elementary level.

In these economic hard times, the last thing school officials want to be told is that they must commit more funds to still another worthy program. Yet the fortunate fact about foreign language programs is that excellence need not be expensive. The proof is in the pages that follow, which describe the accomplishments of one small high school that offers an ambitious Spanish curriculum tied in with a personalized student exchange program. Through the special initiative of a superintendent and a teacher, Crow High School achieves both foreign language learning and cultural awareness at very low cost.

For this fine Bulletin we are indebted to Bruce Kelsh, an OSSC graduate research assistant.

Philip K. Piele
Executive Secretary

Contents

Preface iii

Introduction 1

Foreign Language Teaching in Oregon 2

- O.A.R. 581-22-316 Clarified 3
- Sharing Costs 3
- The Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies 4
- The Commission's Recommendations 7
- The Difficulty in Finding an Exemplary Program 8

International Exchanges in the Schools 11

- Partners of the Alliance 11
- Partners of the Americas 13

The Crow-Ensenada Exchange 16

- Ensenada 16
- Preparations for the Exchange 18
- Mechanics of the Exchange 24
- The Students 26
- Benefits 27
- Assessment 30
- Reproducing the Exchange 30

Appendix 32

Interviews 33

Introduction

This Bulletin attempts to do two things—to give a brief overview of foreign language teaching in Oregon schools and to look at a student exchange begun as part of Crow High School's Spanish program in the Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District. The relationship between these two topics is the role exchange programs can play in teaching a foreign language.

Foreign Language Teaching in Oregon

How many schools in Oregon offer a foreign language as part of the curriculum? This question is surprisingly difficult to answer. As David Arlington, curriculum specialist on foreign languages, Oregon Department of Education, explains, there are no collected data on foreign language programs in the state. "It is a very large task and our office has no legislative mandate to collect such information." Collecting data means dollars. Since there are no state funds earmarked for that purpose, there is no systematic gathering of foreign language program information.

Oregon foreign language teachers find a similar situation. Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers (COFLT) President Art Manchester says, "We have trouble getting information too. We don't even know how many potential members we have. We hear there are 1,200 people in the state who are at least part-time teachers of foreign languages, but it's hard to find out who all those people might be. Presently we have about 300 members."

As to which languages are offered, the Oregon Foreign Language Teachers Directory, which includes university teachers, lists more than thirty different languages. However, this does not mean that all of them are being taught. "It means," says Arlington, "that if you were looking for someone to help you with a language, you could probably find a person who could help you with some interpretation or translation." With no hard data, one would still probably be safe in asserting that French, German, and Spanish remain the staples of foreign language

programs in the state.

O.A.R. 581-22-316 Clarified

One of the motivating factors for the inclusion of foreign languages in school curricula has been Oregon Administrative Rule (O.A.R.) 581-22-316 that lists requirements for high school graduation. Among the minimum twenty-one credits that must be earned, one unit must be earned in "applied arts, fine arts, or foreign language." This single credit can be earned in any one of the three areas or in combination. According to Arlington this administrative rule is often misunderstood.

"The standards require schools to provide foreign language as an option for graduation," he says. "That does not mean a district must offer a foreign language, but it must make an opportunity available for students who would like to take a foreign language. There are a number of available options a district can exercise to meet that obligation. For example, they could work with nearby districts. Two or more districts could offer a program. Students could be bused or they could take a language through correspondence."

Sharing Costs

One example of districts combining efforts to meet that state obligation is to be found in Woodburn. Woodburn, St. Paul, and North Marion schools combined resources in order to offer French, German, and Spanish. They were able to do so by using Oregon Revised Statutes (O.R.S.) Section 190, which grants local governments the authority to

make intergovernmental agreements.

Former Woodburn Superintendent Jens Robinson explains how it works.

> Section 190 is not used much in education, but encourages government units to get together and cooperate. It gives you broad powers. In many districts foreign language programs are difficult to justify on a per pupil cost because of low enrollments. Our high school is 650, North Marion is smaller, and St. Paul is much smaller. If they want to offer a foreign language program they're going to have to offer one whole F.T.E. (full time equivalent). With this situation they only have to hire as much as they absolutely need, which is true for us as well.
>
> The teachers are fully scheduled with decent size classes. The teachers do the moving and students are taught in their own schools with their own peers. We've not had to transport students. It's a super deal for everybody. It's cost efficient. We've got good enrollments. The budget committees are happy and both the teachers are happy.

The Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies

The Presidential Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, established in 1978, produced seventy-five recommendations aimed at raising the level of American international awareness and competence. Among its recommendations was the creation of state advisory councils to identify local concerns.

With Executive Order 80-14 Governor Victor Atiyeh created the Oregon Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies in July 1980. It was the first of its kind in the United States. The commission was to undertake a number of tasks. Among them were the strengthening of foreign language curricula in schools and the increasing of educational activities that provide better understanding of other countries and cultures.

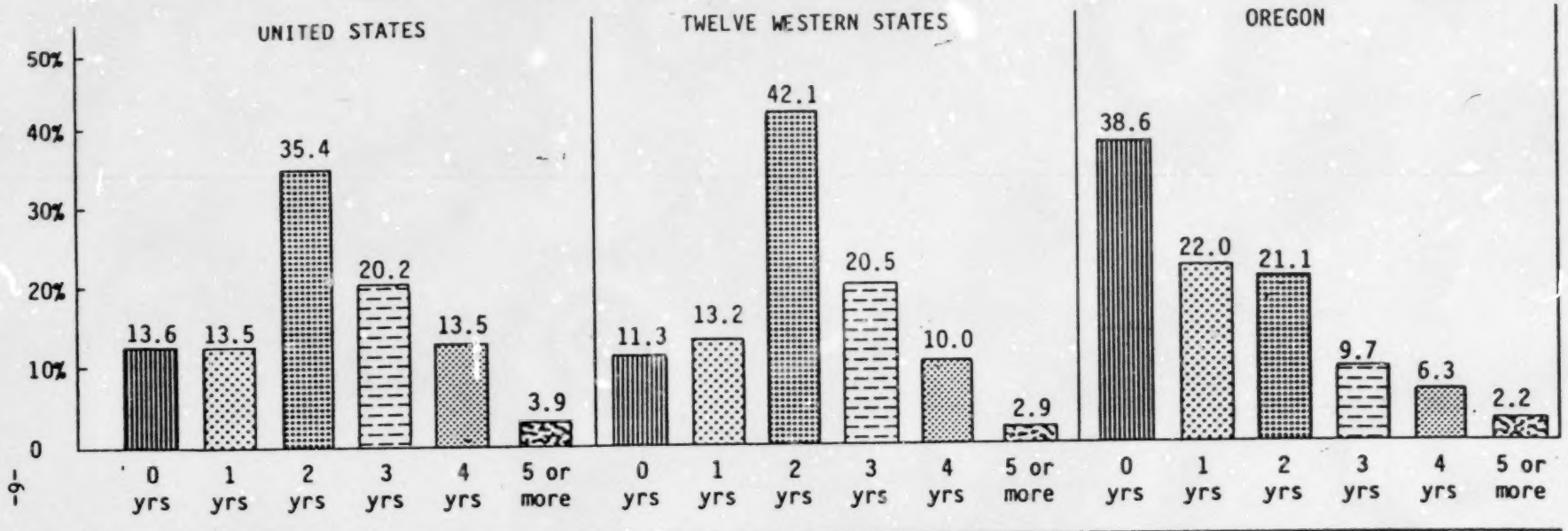
Assisted by an advisory committee and around 100 volunteers from

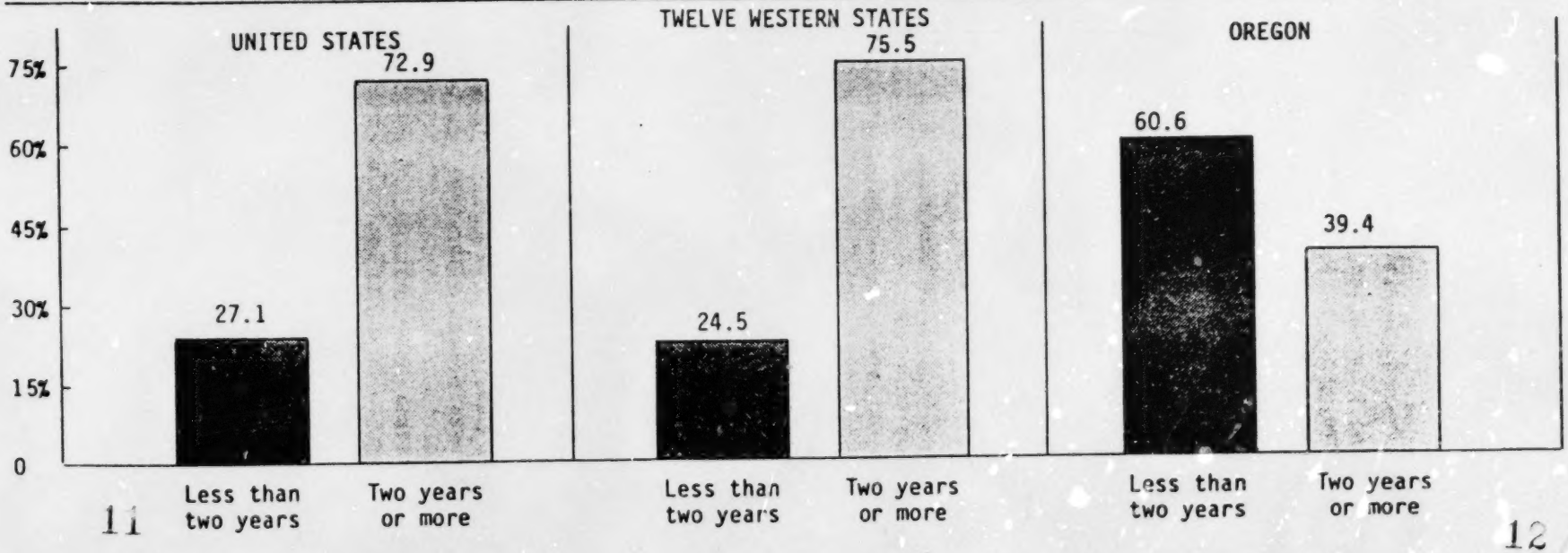
education, business, government, the media, and private life, the commission set out to follow Governor Atiyeh's directive. During its nearly two-year existence, the commission operated on a budget of $44,000 obtained from voluntary contributions by individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations.

In evaluating the condition of foreign language and international studies in Oregon, the commission noted that current standards were inadequate. Oregon high school students were below the national average in foreign language preparation. Information from 1981 College Board statistics indicated that, nationally, 73 percent of college-bound seniors had completed two years of foreign language study. In Oregon only 39 percent had done so. Another 39 percent of college-bound Oregon seniors had taken no foreign languages at all, compared to 14 percent nationally. The attached chart compares Oregon's record in foreign language study to that of the nation and twelve Western states.

This lack of emphasis on foreign language training is strangely incongruent with the state's high level of trade with foreign countries. International trade annually affects one quarter of all personal income in Oregon. The state conducts six billion dollars of foreign trade yearly. The commission expressed its fear that present programs were not preparing Oregon citizens adequately for the increasingly important role that foreign trade and international affairs play in Oregon life. Consequently the commission sought input as to how this situation could be corrected.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY BY COLLEGE BOUND HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS - 1981 ATP REPORTS





Source: College Board

The Commission's Recommendations

The commission held public forums throughout Oregon and consulted with individuals from business and education who were concerned with the impact foreign language and international studies could have in Oregon. In August 1982 the commission issued its final report. The report concluded that civic and business leaders should emphasize the importance of international development and foreign trade to Oregon. The state's educational system should stress the importance of speaking a foreign language.

Among the report's thirty-three recommendations aimed at improving international education, The Oregonian highlighted the following:

--Including international studies in all Oregon elementary schools by 1986

--Exposing all students to foreign language study for entrance into public and private four-year colleges and for graduation from teacher education programs

--Increasing exchange programs between Oregon and foreign schools

The thrust of the report's recommendations to the education sector were meant to achieve higher quantitative and qualitative standards in foreign language instruction and international studies at all levels. This was to be accomplished by increasing the study of foreign historical patterns and international relationships as well as greater study of foreign languages with an emphasis on practical communication skills. It was recognized that these goals would be gained by developing long-term measures rather than a hurried "crash program."

Two ideas stand out in the commission's report regarding school curriculum: (1) provide an introduction to foreign language in the

elementary grades and (2) increase the opportunity for increased cultural awareness. At all levels increased language learning was seen as a priority. This included urging all high school students to study a foreign language for two years and creating a college admissions requirement of two years of a foreign language or an equivalent proficiency. The report recommended knowledge of a foreign language as a requirement for teacher certification programs as well. Furthermore, the report advocated expanding courses in the Pacific Rim languages of Japanese, Chinese, and Spanish, all increasingly important for trade reasons. The complete report is available from Documents Clerk, Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway, Salem, Oregon 97310. The cost is $3.00 postage paid. Checks should be made payable to Oregon Department of Education.

The Difficulty in Finding an Exemplary Program

What constitutes an exemplary program? "The question is seemingly harmless," replies Arlington, "and one that would seem to have a ready answer. Unfortunately the question is more complicated than it would seem at first glance. If you ask me who has some good programs, I could point out some good programs."

"However, the first thing that's wrong with my giving you an answer is that there are some very good things going on that I'm sure I'm not aware of. Secondly, it does not answer the question of what the goal of a particular program is and how that matches with another district somewhere else, even of comparable size."

In addition, there are problems in comparing programs at different

levels--elementary, middle, and high schools. Different objectives are seen as desirable for different age groups. Varying size districts are involved and different languages.

As mentioned earlier, one of the problems in looking for information is the lack of centralized information. So much of what is done with language programs is accomplished locally, tailored to local circumstances. That type of information is rarely known outside a district. As Arlington points out, it can sometimes be as difficult to get information about large districts as it is about the whole state. "For example, in very large districts," he explains, "there is coordination of programs at the secondary level. At the elementary level, however, there may be a number of classes in foreign languages going. Usually it's because there is a person who knows a language, is excited about it, and teaching a class or two. But there is no systematic approach in the elementary. It's more school by school."

The broad question of what constitutes a good language program is hard to answer. "Is there any agreement as to a good program in anything?" queries COFLT's Manchester. "Certainly with a foreign language a lot of it depends on the knowledge of the teacher, the enthusiasm of the teacher, and the interest the teacher has in the students and in working with them."

Arlington elaborates on the complexity of determining a good program.

> "Unless you identify what it is that you're looking for it's awfully difficult to make a judgment on whether a program is good or not. There are a lot of differences between and among programs when you compare them. Are you talking about an oral approach--chiefly conversational? Or are you talking about the more traditional reading and writing approach? So if you compare the

people who speak German in district X with those who speak German in district Y, you could say that one is a success and the other a failure. If you go by standardized test scores, a college entrance exam for example, you might go away saying one is an excellent program, but in fact it may not be suitable elsewhere. Maybe you didn't fully understand what was wanted in those two districts. Unless you develop some criteria that takes into account what local circumstances are, it is very, very difficult to make an honest, reliable judgment on what is or is not a good program. To go out without some criteria collectively agreed upon by those actively engaged in the foreign language classrooms often spells trouble.

Arlington indicates that his office is attempting to work with COFLT in establishing criteria by which to judge the quality of foreign language programs. As he points out, "If we could get the word out on outstanding programs, they would be a stimulant to others to do similar kinds of things. It would be particularly useful to discover programs in smaller districts where they don't have a lot of dollars to invest."

International Exchanges in the Schools

The governor's commission recommended that "each school district encourage international exchanges for faculty and secondary schools, in both directions, using exchange students and faculty as an important educational resource, and cooperating with other organizations in development of well-planned exchange programs." The commission discovered that exchange programs aroused great enthusiasm from all those who mentioned them in the public forums. Exchanges were seen as broadening people's horizons and as "offering strong academic incentives for study of foreign languages, culture, and as particularly valuable in faculty development."

Partners of the Alliance

One Oregon foreign language teacher has said that there are over 200 exchange programs available. Some of the better known are American Field Service, Rotary International Youth Exchange, American Heritage Association, and Partners of the Americas. The remainder of this Bulletin will look at Partners of the Americas' beginnings in Lane County and how interest in Spanish exchange programs prompted the Crow-Applegate-Lorane district to create its own unique exchange.

The Crow-Applegate-Lorane district has a tradition of interest in international exchanges. The district's former superintendent of twenty-four years, Ed Cooper, was one of the prime movers in beginning the Partner of the Alliance educational exchange in Oregon. It began with a trip to Central America that Cooper took with his wife in 1964.

"When we got back," he remembers, "we thought there should be some way of having an exchange program, not simply a language program. I talked to Dale Parnell, Lane County superintendent. He said that was the kind of thing that was up Senator Morse's alley." Cooper then wrote to Wayne Morse proposing an exchange program with Central America. Morse took the proposal to the Agency for International Development.

Partners of the Alliance is a program started by the Agency of International Development (AID). Individual states are partners with particular Central American countries. Oregon's partner is Costa Rica. When Cooper's educational exchange plan was presented to AID, it sent Cooper to Costa Rica to explain his ideas to the Costa Rican Ministry of Education. The ministry was interested in starting an exchange, so arrangements were made for an exchange to begin as quickly as possible.

In January and February 1965, during the Central American summer vacation, ten Costa Rican educators came to Lane County. With financial backing from the Alliance for Progress, these teachers worked in twelve Lane County school districts during their stay. The Costa Rican visitors served as resource personnel in Spanish and social studies classes. They also observed school administration procedures, teaching practices, and use of equipment and supplies, and they participated in Oregon home and social life. As Cooper recalls, "Their participation added an international view to our public education, provided practical experiences in the use of Spanish, and involved our faculties, students, and public in a cooperative effort to improve education."

Berton Bailey, then consultant on foreign language programs, Oregon Department of Education, said of the visitation, "the visiting educators

have made a significant contribution toward a greater understanding of the people of Latin America." Cooper feels an additional benefit of the exchange was a heightened interest in learning Spanish.

Bailey's assessment of this exchange as conceived by Cooper was positive. "My overall evaluation is that the program, as evidenced in Lane County, has been a great success. I make this judgment on two aspects of the program, one, the impact of the visitation upon the visiting Costa Rican educators, and two, the impact upon the school districts and community." Senator Morse felt that through this program "an important chapter in Oregon educational history has been written."

Partners of the Americas

An affiliate of Partners of the Alliance, Partners of the Americas was begun in 1967. Primarily a student exchange program, it annually assists a maximum of thirty Oregon and thirty Costa Rican students in arranging their two-month stays in each others' countries.

There are two programs, a summer one in which Oregonians go to Costa Rica, and a winter one in which Costa Ricans come to Oregon. Because the school years are the opposite of one another, both sets of students are able to attend classes in the other's country. It's an eight- to nine-week program depending on travel arrangements.

According to a former coordinator of the program, Barbara Roessner, all Spanish teachers in the state get announcements about Partners of the Americas. If they choose to participate in the program, they announce the requirements to their classes and assist students in making the proper applications. Students must have at least two years

(preferably more) of Spanish.

Students who are accepted to the program fly to Costa Rica during the summer for a two-month experience in Costa Rican schools. One month is spent in a large city, the other month in a smaller town. Two Oregon Spanish teachers accompany the group as guides. The teachers coordinate the program in-country and assist students with any problems or emergencies.

Partners of the Americas is coordinated in Oregon by Spanish teachers who volunteer their time. The role of coordinator is passed informally from one teacher to another as interest is shown. "I know it sounds rather haphazard," Roessner admits, "but it really works out very well." Student applications are sent to the state's teacher coordinator. Final screening of candidates, complete with interviews, is accomplished by a select committee that meets annually at Lewis and Clark College. The committee consists of Spanish teachers and former exchange students.

A maximum of thirty Oregon students can be chosen. The maximum of thirty holds true in Costa Rica as well. In Oregon there has only been one year in which more than thirty students applied. In Costa Rica, it has been common for there to be as many as 200 applicants for the thirty slots. Lately, finances have affected the numbers of applicants in both countries.

"This past year the trip cost around $850," says Roessner. "Most of the cost is for the airfare, and approximately $100 goes to the program. I think if you check around you're going to find that the Costa Rican exchange is probably one of the least expensive."

Nonetheless, due to tougher economic times, fewer students have been able to manage the costs.

Proportionately, the Crow-Applegate-Lorane district has sent a large number of students to Costa Rica through Partners of the Americas. This is not surprising remembering Ed Cooper's involvement in beginning educational exchanges with Costa Rica. Yet, financial costs have become a factor in limiting the extent that exchanges with Costa Rica were practical.

Sharon Stirtz, Spanish teacher at Crow High School, has created a less expensive alternative to Partners of the Americas. In this way Crow has expanded its commitment to the goals of exchange programs and created a program worth sharing.

The Crow-Ensenada Exchange

Crow High School has had a history of encouraging cultural exchange programs. In 1969 Sharon Stirtz began teaching Spanish at Crow. At that time, Crow students were able to attend Mexican summer institutes with the help of an active Spanish club. Crow established ties with Partners of the Americas early in its development. In the last ten years nine Crow students have travelled to Costa Rica for two-month stays through its exchange program. An additional four students have stayed with Costa Rican families from three to thirteen months through arrangements personally made by Cooper and Stirtz.

In addition to Crow students traveling to exchange programs, Spanish speaking students from Latin America were attending classes at Crow during the school year. By 1972 the Crow-Applegate-Lorane district had more exchange students than any district in Lane County, a remarkable feat considering the size of this single "A" high school (1982-83 enrollment around 130 students grades 9-12).

Stirtz assisted the Costa Rica exchange and also established Crow High School's connection with International Fellowship. International Fellowship, whose offices are in Buffalo, New York, is similar to the better known American Field Service. But it is the exchange with Ensenada, Mexico, that has had the greatest impact of all student exchange programs at Crow.

Ensenada

There are many Spanish programs offered in Mexico, usually during

the summer. After all, Mexico is the United States' closest Spanish speaking neighbor. Spanish teachers often have a bewildering range of pamphlets and brochures thrust upon them advertising such programs. Rather than join with a ready-made program, Sharon Stirtz, Spanish teacher at Crow, created her own exchange with Mexico.

Stirtz found that some of her students were no longer able to afford to go to Costa Rica, or Columbia, or other Central or South American countries. The most expensive part of any exchange program is transportation. The economics of the situation were such that a viable alternative needed to be found. Stirtz began to look nearer to home. Mexico was a natural choice.

Choosing Ensenada, Mexico, for the exchange was a fluke, Stirtz admits. "Ensenada was chosen simply because I was going there anyway to act as interpreter. My parents wanted me to join them for a trip to Mexico. I imagine any place in Mexico could be chosen as long as it is relatively close in order to keep transportation costs down."

South of San Diego in Baja California, Ensenada is ninety miles from the border. A city of 150,000, it is roughly one and a half times the size of Eugene. It is a border town in many ways. There definitely is an American influence. "However," says Stirtz, "when you get into those homes and those schools, it's Mexico. I was originally afraid that it would be too Anglasized, but it isn't." Careful preparation went into arranging the exchange with schools in Ensenada. It took three years after Stirtz's first trip with her family before Crow students actually went to Ensenada.

Preparations for the Exchange

Stage 1

In 1976 Stirtz took the first steps for her project. She wrote a letter introducing herself to Ensenada's Bureau of Tourism explaining what she wanted to do. However, the letter never arrived. Stirtz prepared a slide show of Eugene and the surrounding countryside. She used her own personal slides as well as slides available under vocational planning from the Lane County Education Service District. She intended to present the slide show to Ensenada schools in an effort to meet school officials and teachers there. Stirtz also took high school yearbooks, photo albums, and the names and addresses of all her Spanish students in the hopes of finding pen pals for them. Armed with these materials, and not knowing her letter had gone astray, Stirtz set out for Ensenada.

Upon her arrival, she discovered that the letter did not reach its intended destination. Nevertheless, Stirtz was able to get the Bureau of Tourism to write her a letter of introduction once she was in Ensenada. With that letter she visited a public coed school. It didn't appeal to her. Stirtz felt it was too large and therefore unsuited for her purposes. She then learned of a coed private school, Colegio Fray Junipero Serra. Introducing herself to some uniformed schoolgirls on the street, Stirtz also managed to be invited to a festival at Escuela Guadalupe Victoria, a girls' school. Working with an English teacher she met at the coed school and with the Mother Superior at the girls' school, Stirtz was able to give her slide show and presentation on Oregon.

While in the schools, Stirtz distributed the names and addresses of her own students. The pen pal exchange was an important first link between the schools. A number of pen pal relationships continued for the full four years of high school. During the later student exchanges, some of the writers were able to meet their pen pals in person.

Returning to Crow, Stirtz approached her superintendent, Ed Cooper, about the possibility of establishing an exchange with Ensenada. Cooper's interest in such programs was clear. He encouraged Stirtz to explore the possibilities. She gathered information about other exchanges for ideas, wrote to the Mexican schools, and with the help of her Spanish students presented the idea to the Crow-Applegate-Lorane School Board. The board approved the plan and told Stirtz to request $700 for the exchange in the following year's budget.

Stage Two

In March 1977 Stirtz returned to Ensenada carrying letters and small gifts for pen pals, school yearbooks, and slides of Crow High School. Elena Gonzalez, the English teacher at Colegio Fray Junipero Serra, and Stirtz decided to start the first exchange of students in May of that year. A senior from Crow would go to Ensenada and stay with Gonzalez and her family for ten days, while Gonzalez's niece, a preparatoria graduate, would attend Crow High School for the 1977-78 school year.

Certainly one of the factors that contributed to the initiation and success of this exchange program was the personal relationship that developed between Elena Gonzalez and Sharon Stirtz. Says Stirtz, "I met Elena Gonzalez and we clicked. We were both involved in language

teaching for the same reasons and just hit it off." The resulting friendship coupled with patience and perserverance has helped to sustain the Crow-Ensenada exchange in spite of inevitable frustrations and obstacles.

Stage Three

All the Spanish students at Crow planned to travel to Ensenada in spring 1977. Unfortunately Ensenada had floods and the ten-day trip had to be delayed until spring 1978. Pen pal correspondence continued in the meantime, and Passport to Mexico, a classroom series by EMC Corporation that uses situational dialogues, assisted in preparation for the trip. Crow students got tourist cards from the Mexican consulate in Portland. Stirtz checked on the school's medical insurance; students were covered while on the trip. Arrangements were also made for an English speaking doctor to be available in Ensenada in case of emergencies. Gonzalez organized housing and school placements. The school board was kept posted on preparations.

For reasons related to time, expense, and insurance, the school board rejected Stirtz's original suggestion of using a school bus. Although Amtrack and Greyhound were considerably less expensive than the airlines, the latter mode of travel was chosen.

"When I first went to the school board," relates Stirtz, "they were emphatic that we take the plane and then a van or bus from San Diego. The board felt very protective, which is good. They wanted the kids all together and under the protection of chaperones. They felt the plane was the best choice."

Stirtz booked a flight to San Diego from Eugene. She arranged for

a bus to the border and chartered a Mexicoach bus from the border to Ensenada. The school board contributed its share of $2,353. This covered half of the fifteen students' airfares, all bus transportation, and full transportation costs for the two Spanish speaking chaperones. Each student paid less than $90 for the journey.

Crow students spent the year readying themselves for their adventure. "In preparing to go to Ensenada, we used our regular textbook to a minimum actually," relates Stirtz. "I have a whole unit organized to prepare them for Ensenada. Students have to write essays on various subjects, on our school here, on family and family life, parents, jobs, and so on, in order that they have the vocabulary to explain those things when they're in Ensenada. Students have to practice their responses orally, so that if someone asks them a question, they can answer. We do situational exercises--buying things in a drugstore, ordering in a restaurant, those kinds of activities. We practice verbs geared toward the trip, and we use the language laboratory for review and listening comprehension."

In addition, students wrote letters introducing themselves and shopped for gifts typical of Oregon. Pacific Northwest Bell donated posters. A local savings institution and the Oregon Department of Transportation donated booklets.

The ten day trip to Ensenada involved missing six days of classes at Crow. In arranging the dates for the journey, athletic events, school activities, and student schedules were taken into account. Spanish students had to make arrangements with their other teachers to do required assignments. "The teachers at Crow have been very

supportive of our trip," says Stirtz. "Some of them have been very inventive in creating assignments to be completed while students are in Ensenada."

"Students miss six days of school, which is considerable," admits Stirtz, "but compare the experience to going to the state basketball tournament. Plus you are looking at students who are academically talented. By the time students get through junior high and freshman Spanish, those who aren't capable have dropped out. Generally you'll find that capable Spanish students are also capable students in other areas as well."

Stage Four--The Trip Itself

Due to careful preparation, the travel arrangements went smoothly. The Crow group flew to San Diego in May 1978 and took the bus to Ensenada. The long awaited journey was a reality. Superintendent Cooper, a chaperone on the trip, explains what happened. "We had a busload of students chattering along, until we reached the school. Then there was total silence. I thought I would have to throw the students off the bus!" Gonzalez and the host families met the Crow group at the school and took them home.

While in Ensenada, Crow students attend local schools. "You have much more control over students when the exchange is during our school year," explains Stirtz. "Plus, while they are in Ensenada they attend school. It's important for discipline and control reasons as well as encouraging learning." During the 1978 trip two girls attended the Catholic girls' school while the other Oregon students went to the private coed school where Gonzalez taught.

The ten-day visit contained all the cultural shock, mistakes in grammar, and errrors in pronunciation that would naturally be expected. Cooper remembers how he helped a Crow student, nearly in tears, begin talking with her new Mexican friend. "We went out for a hamburger and took along a notebook. We got them writing to each other first. Since they could both read and write better than they thought they could speak, they began to communicate." Eventually the two girls braved the perils of spoken conversation.

The visit to Ensenada with its family activities and schooling culminated in a carne asada, a festive dinner, for all the Crow students and their Mexican brothers and sisters. When the Oregon students returned to Crow they shared their experience with the school board, put on an all-school assembly, and gave a carne asada for their parents, complete with a program and slide show.

The interchange with Ensenada that was begun in 1976 and brought to fruition with the actual exchange of students has continued. Floods in 1980 prevented a group of Ensenada students accompanied by Gonzalez from visiting Crow for a ten-day stay. In spring 1981 a group of Crow students went to Ensenada for another successful sojourn. "We had hoped to do this every other year," says Stirtz wistfully, "but as it's turned out we've had to wait a year."

Another Crow trip to Ensenada is scheduled for spring 1983. Money was set aside in the past for trips, but the budget is more tentative this time. Tax levies are a problem everywhere. "We keep a positive attitude," declares Stirtz. "We're thinking of other ways of making money with the Spanish club to make up the difference. We don't know

for sure whether the trip's on, but we hope so."

What started out as a group exchange turned out to be both a group and an individual exchange. Of the Crow students who stayed with Ensenada families in the spring, several arranged for extended stays in the summer and the academic year. Returning the hospitality, Crow students have opened their homes to Ensenada students. Families have become involved as well. Mexican parents of exchange students have come to Crow. Families from Crow have gone to Mexico. A circle of friendship has been created.

Mechanics of the Exchange

Finance

In the past the Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District has set aside funds for the ten-day trips to Ensenada. The board has paid for half of each student's airfare, full airfares for two chaperones, all bus transportation, and enough hospitality money to cover gifts and banquets for the hosts. "The school board has been extremely supportive," explains Stirtz. "When we first started we had some school board members who really felt that academics weren't getting the same shake as athletics. They looked at how much was being spent on football helmets for example, and then the Spanish program. Using those kinds of comparisons, it became obvious that we weren't spending as much on academics as other programs like sports. The point being, we should spend as much for academics and careers as for our athletic programs." Stirtz adds that "one of my key points has been to budget $2500 a year toward the Spanish program."

Students work at raising money as well. The Spanish Club earns funds through car washes, Mexican dinners, and the usual array of money making schemes. The Spanish club grants scholarships to help those Spanish students who return to Ensenada for lengthier stays--two months in the summer or a full school year--as well as those students going to other countries. The club awards have been in the neighborhood of $400 toward transportation costs. Because of the school board's financial support of the ten-day trips, individual students have paid around $150 as their share of expenses.

As for Ensenada students coming to Crow, the school board again has shown itself to be very generous. "Some school districts have very strict rules on how many tuition-free students they can have. It's not a problem here," Stirtz says. "I've been able to develop the kind of program we have here because of the support of the school board. We don't charge our foreign students any tuition."

In addition, local community members have been cooperative and pleased with the exchange. They have willingly taken exchange students into their own homes. It is like taking on another member of the family, with the responsibility and expense. "Although students have their own spending money," Stirtz says, "you feed them and take them with you wherever you go. Anything extra you do, you do with them." Because of the economy, Stirtz admits it's been harder lately to find host families, but generally backing for the program has been good. An additional incentive has been a potential $50 a month federal tax deduction for hosting foreign student.

"Sharon gets a lot of support from the board and from the

community," former Superintendent Cooper states. "Part of it is that her program is like the frosting on the cake. Enough students know Spanish that people can see the results. It's a popular program."

The Students

Scheduling seems to be one of the factors essential to deciding which students are involved in the exchange program. The Ensenada students who come to Crow for the full year have already graduated from their own schools. "They come here for a year between the completion of school and the starting of a career or university. Their educational structure doesn't really allow them to come here in the middle of the year," explains Stirtz.

Crow students have more flexibility with their academic program. Those students who have gone to Ensenada for the full year have been juniors. They attend regular classes in Ensenada and receive a transcript when they leave. In addition to Ensenada courses, Crow High School often requires additional projects in order to complete graduation requirements. Some students have been required to write regular articles for the school newspaper about their Ensenada experiences to complete an English credit.

Stirtz is pleased to say that Crow students were getting As and Bs in Ensenada. "However," she says," students who have gone the full year have told me it takes about two months to really get into the experience--to get the language down and a routine established. Then they can benefit academically."

Stirtz translates Ensenada transcripts, and credit is awarded

accordingly. "We look at our requirements here and try to see that they are met," she explains, "but we've also had to be flexible. A student exchange is a lifetime experience. It's no vacation. Anytime you place a student in another culture, it's a lot of work. No matter how much preparation linguistically or culturally students have had, being the only one in a family that's different is an experience you can't duplicate here." The Crow-Applegate-Lorane district recognizes that learning experiences are not always visibly measured.

Maturity is another factor critical to group and individual exchanges. Each student brings something different to the experience. On the first ten-day trip sophomores through seniors from Crow went to Ensenada. Stirtz later reflected that sophomores were perhaps not able to benefit enough from the experience. The following trip she took just juniors and seniors. This coming trip she would like to take her sophomores. "I've got a group of sophomores that are mature enough to handle this," she says in justification. "In a small district you know your kids. I keep in close touch with my principal and superintendent. They give me that leeway and trust my judgment."

Benefits

There are certain advantages to a small, personalized exchange program like this one developed through the friendship and cooperation of Sharon Stirtz and Elena Gonzalez. Stirtz feels that one of the difficulties with large exchange programs (with the notable exception of the Oregon Partners of the Americas) is that the students aren't really screened, that it is more a matter of whether a student has enough money

to go. She believes that from the Ensenada exchange she has gotten consistently good students, more so than with a larger exchange program. That is not to say there is not room for error. When an exchange is not working out, a student is sent home early. Stirtz and Gonzalez keep in mind that this kind of exchange program is a learning experience--for them as well as for the students.

Crow's Ensenada exchange has proved to be an attractive incentive for students to take Spanish. As Cooper puts it, "When students begin Spanish at Crow High School, they know that eventually they'll be able to use it on one of these trips." Nonetheless, taking Spanish requires a commitment on a student's part.

Crow's Spanish students say that in order to take Spanish they must drop other things. "It's something we have to deal with in the Spanish program," confesses Stirtz. "Students begin in the seventh grade and by the time they graduate they have had six years of Spanish. It takes a substantial chunk of their elective hours, plus it isn't as easy as some other electives."

In a small district part of a language teacher's job is recruiting students. It involves evening programs and dinners, skits and plays. The Ensenada tradition has done much to raise the profile of Spanish in the school and has made students and the community aware of the advantages of taking Spanish.

"My emphasis has been to get students started," clarifies Stirtz, "and then to get the contact. If I can get them to a foreign country for the ten days in the spring or two months in the summer, they get bitten. They say, oh, this is what it's really all about. This isn't

just playing games or doing verbs, this is really communicating. When they go, they really get caught. When they come back they say, teach me this, I need more of that. They discover that Spanish is something that they'd like to pursue. Many of them go on with Spanish at the university level."

Confirming this, a veteran of a Crow-Ensenada exchange, Kristi Doane says, "It gave us a good taste of what Mexico was like and got us all excited. It helps you decide you want to go on learning your Spanish."

The benefits to the students' Spanish speaking ability are rapidly apparent. "My Spanish improved really fast," recalls Jodie White, another Crow student. "You pick it up fast. You listen, get right into the conversation, and do your best. People are really nice about correcting you because they know you're trying." Both Doane and White went on a ten-day trip to Ensenada and returned for longer stays.

"The most obvious benefit is that it gives the student a chance to put to real and daily use the language that they have been learning in the classroom," declares Stirtz. "In addition, I find that they learn a great deal about themselves. They grow in self-confidence. They gain a broader perspective that reflects itself in the way they deal with people and new situations."

A number of Crow graduates have gone on to major in Spanish in college. The more recent trend is for students to have dual majors such as Spanish and international business or Spanish and social work.

Assessment

"It's difficult to talk about the Spanish program without talking about the exchange program," says Crow High School Principal Ed Davidson. "It's been a very successful program. Sharon has done so much with the promotion of the Spanish program. She's really sold the Spanish program and the advantages and importance of the exchange program."

"In my opinion," he continues, "the biggest impact of the program has been our students getting to know and to be friends with students who are from another country and who speak another language."

"In a school our size," says Superintendent Richard Beebe, "Students don't have many opportunities to involve themselves in things that enlarge their horizons in the way that the Spanish program has. It's an excellent program."

"What Sharon has done is stupendous," exclaims Cooper. "It would be a mistake to say that this is just a Spanish program--it excells that. It's a unique program. We have students at Crow who are international. I think that if you can speak somebody else's language, there is an understanding that goes with it that you don't get otherwise."

Reproducing the Exchange

"Find someone like Sharon Stirtz," says Cooper, "a good Spanish teacher who handles the language well and is interested in an exchange program." Cooper suggests that a district grant that teacher a three-month sabbatical or assistance of some kind to go in person to the

place where an exchange might take place.

Patience and thorough preparation is necessary. It took Stirtz three years for her plans to blossom into reality. Start small, cautions Cooper; begin with pen pal correspondence and initiate the exchange with a half dozen or less students. Let things grow of their own accord.

Financial concerns are of course critical. The Crow-Applegate-Lorane district is to be commended for its strong support of the exchange program. However, even without district support, this type of personalized exchange program, created by two cooperating teachers in different countries, is still possible. The costs are low for individual students. Even paying full transportation, the expense per student could be kept below $400. This is a real savings compared to some exchanges and could permit students who could not otherwise afford to participate an opportunity for a unique experience. Funds raised by an active Spanish club could cut costs further.

The advantages are obvious. An exchange encourages foreign language study and increases foreign understanding, exactly what the governor's commission ordered. "The exchange program increases the friendship between people," says Chava Valencia, an Ensenada student at Crow. "I hope I have made friends here for my lifetime. Good friends are impossible to forget. When I'm back in Mexico, I can say, I have good friends, far away from here, but they are still good friends." And, as Lucia Salcido, another exchange student says, "The friendship will continue."

Appendix

American Field Service (AFS)

(Purpose: To promote international understanding and world peace through student exchanges.)
Betty Getzendanner
1355 Manzanita Street North
Salem, OR 97303
Phone: (503) 393-0375

American Heritage Association

(Purpose: To conduct international exchange programs for educators, students and others.)
Jean Barber
Box 425
Lake Oswego, OR 97034
Phone: (503) 635-3703

Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers (COFLT)

(Purpose: To promote foreign language education in Oregon.)
Mrs. Dee Durham
2109 SE 29th Street
Albany, OR 97321
Phone: (503) 928-2682

Experiment in International Living

(Purpose: Home stay exchanges in U.S. and abroad at college, high school level. Training for Peace Corps.)
Paticia G. Moss
1510 Fairmount Ave South
Salem, OR 97302
Phone: (503) 581-9785

Partners of the Americas

(Purpose: To facilitate cooperation between Oregon and its partners in Latin America.)
Mr. William Webber
c/o World Affairs Council
Room 252
1912 SW 6th Avenue
Portland, OR 97201
Phone: (503) 229-3009

Rotary International Youth Exchange Program
District 510 (Northern Oregon)
Dr. Tom McAlister, Chairman
14417 Union School Road NE
Woodburn, OR 97071
Phone: (503) 981-5111

District 511 (Southern Oregon)
Mr. Larry King
1779 NW Riverview Drive
Roseburg, OR 97470
Phone: (503) 673-0149

Youth for Understanding

(Purpose: Conducts international exchange programs for students at the secondary level.)
Joan Malling
2443 NE 37th
Portland, OR 97212

For more information concerning the Crow-Ensenada exchange contact:
Sharon Stirtz
Crow High School
Crow Road
Veneta, OR 97487
Phone: (503) 935-2227

Interviews

Dwayne Adcock, curriculum coordinator, Eugene 4-J School District, Eugene, Oregon. Telephone interview, May 21, 1982.

David Arlington, curriculum specialist in foreign languages, Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon. Telephone interview, May 24, 1982.

Richard Beebe, superintendent, Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District, Crow, Oregon. Telephone interview, September 15, 1982.

Ed Cooper, former superintendent, Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District, Veneta, Oregon. Interview, June 23, 1982.

Ed Davidson, principal, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Telephone interview, September 10, 1982.

Kristi Doane, student, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Interview, May 25, 1982.

Art Manchester, president, Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers, Gresham High School, Gresham, Oregon. Telephone interview, May 24, 1982.

Jens Robinson, superintendent, Woodburn School District, Woodburn, Oregon. Telephone interview, May 24, 1982.

Barbara Roessner, teacher, Putnam High School, Milwaukee, Oregon. Telephone interview, September 6, 1982.

Lucia Salcido, student, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Interview, May 28, 1982.

Sharon Stirtz, teacher, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Interview, May 28, 1982.

Chava Valencia, student, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Interview, May 28,1982.

Jodie White, student, Crow High School, Crow, Oregon. Interview, May 25, 1982.